Charles "Doc" Anderson

Capitol News Report ✯ Texas House District 56

Chairman, Texas Legislative Rural Caucus
Vice-Chairman, Agriculture & Livestock • Local & Consent Calendars
Investments & Financial Services

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Texas House of Representatives

Charles "Doc" Anderson
District 56

Howdy Friends!

As always, representing your voice, in the hallowed halls of our Capitol, is an extremely high honor for me. The only thing better is to be back home in the absolute Heart of Texas!

Because of our budget and revenue structure, Texas gains a lot of attention nationwide as other states look to navigate their way through budget shortfalls and stagnant economies. Our response, however might prove to be daunting to them, i.e. constitutional requirement for a balanced budget, as well as constitutional bans on both a personal income tax and deficit spending — but this conservative approach tells the story of how Texas has navigated this challenging national economy.

The Texas economy keeps performing at levels which now make us the #1 destination for businesses interested in getting started or expanding. The state's revenue and budget picture coming into the 83rd Legislature looked better than it has in over 20 years, in no small part because of the prudent budget actions taken two years ago and the success in the Texas oil & gas industry.

With the state fortunately NOT facing an emergency budget situation, the Legislature focused on important local and statewide long-term needs, including:

- ✯ Restoration of funding for the **Waco Center for Youth**;
- ✯ Meeting all of the obligations of the state for the next 24-month period with a budget that is **balanced** and does **not exceed the spending cap**;
- ✯ **No new or increased taxes or fees, and a franchise tax reduction** for small businesses;
- ✯ Addressing critical funding issues related to **disaster recovery in West** and other locations;
- ✯ Restoring funding commitments to public education from the 5%-7% cuts in 2011;
- ✯ Stabilizing the long-term actuarial soundness of the **Teacher Retirement System**, while providing a modest, one-time **retirement increase** for teachers who retired before August 31, 2004; and
- ✯ Pending voter approval in November, the establishment of the **Statewide Water Infrastructure Fund** for Texas (SWIFT), which will put Texas on solid footing to plan for future water needs in our rapidly growing state.

I hope you find this useful and informative. Thank you again for the opportunity to serve as your voice in the Texas Capitol.

GOD BLESS TEXAS!

Doc

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*Rep. Anderson and the ladies of the **McGregor Garden Club** at the dedication and naming of a portion of Highway 84 as the **"Blue Star Memorial Highway,"** a tribute to the Armed Forces that have defended the United States of America.*

THE FUTURE OF WATER IN TEXAS

It is no big secret that when it comes to water because of the drought, Texas has challenges. **The 2012 State Water Plan** shows that over the next 50 years, our water supply is expected to decrease 18% and our water demands, due to projected population growth are expected to increase by 27%. If that happens then Texas will be short almost **8.3 million acre-feet** of water by 2060, which would cause tremendous losses to Texas families and businesses (as high as $116 billion annually).

So what are we going to do about it?

We are going to do what Texans do best, get to work. The State Water Plan proposed contains over 500 projects, that if fully implemented, will develop **9 million acre-feet** of new water over the next 50 years. It will also overhaul the Texas Water Development Board and require the agency to take an even more active role in water policy development. To jump start this plan the legislature passed HB4 and SJR 1, which set up two dedicated funds accounts for essential projects within the State Water Plan. If Texas voters approve the constitutional amendment (SJR1) requiring 2 billion dollars from the Economic Stability Fund (Rainy Day Fund), Texas will have the opportunity to make the future of water secure for many generations to come. **Look for the constitutional amendment on the November ballot.**

DOC ANDERSON ELECTED CHAIRMAN OF THE TEXAS LEGISLATIVE RURAL CAUCUS

I was honored to be elected **Chairman of the Rural Caucus** for the 83rd Texas Legislature. The Rural Caucus is a bi-partisan group of legislators from both the House and the Senate which meets during session to stay informed, and communicate with the Legislature at large on matters of importance to the rural communities in Texas, providing a strong, cohesive voice on the rural perspective in legislative matters.

It was a pleasure and a privilege to work on behalf of **rural Texans** to maintain an effective presence, and to share and amend legislation on the floor. This became crucial on several fronts, including the **Anderson amendment** to preserve locally-based medical transportation options for small towns and rural areas in a Medicaid consolidation bill which threatened to transfer those services to out of state brokers.

From water, to transportation, to education, to the state budget issues, rural Texas should always have a vital voice in the shaping and continued success of our great state. Rural Texas has historically had a crucial transformative role in the shaping of Texas and Texas culture, it is imperative that we continue that role going forward.

*Doc addressed the **Texas State FFA General Assembly** and their **State Advanced Degree & Awards Check Program** at the MCC Performing Arts Center on June 13, 2013. The Texas State FFA has awarded 150 scholarships totaling over $1 million to well deserving teens across the state.*

BIG CHANGES FOR TEXAS HIGH SCHOOLS

One of the momentous achievements of the 83rd Legislature was the reform of Texas High Schools. This new program will reduce the number of required end-of-course exams from **fifteen to five**, as well as to allow students to have more flexible graduation plans by allowing the parent and student to choose between three different pathways:

FOUNDATION PLAN	ENDORSEMENT PLAN *(Workforce Bound)*	DISTINGUISHED PLAN *(College Bound)*
4 English/Language Arts	*In addition to the requirements of the Foundation Plan, students will be allowed to earn "Endorsements" in one of five areas:*	*4 English/Language Arts*
3 Math		*4 Math*
3 Science		*4 Science*
3 Social Studies	*1) Arts & Humanities*	*4 Social Studies*
2 Foreign Language	*2) Science/Technology/Engineering/Math (STEM)*	*2 Foreign Language*
1 Fine Art	*3) Business & Industry*	*1 Fine Art*
1 Physical Education	*4) Public Service*	*1 Physical Education*
5 Electives	*5) Multidisciplinary Studies*	*5 Electives*

Additionally, end-of-course exams will no longer count as 15% of a student's course grade - a direct response to concerns expressed from parents, teachers, and administrators. Campus and district accountability will also now be evaluated on more than just state standardized assessments. Now there will be at least three additional indicators of academic performance: 1. Percentage of students graduating with endorsements or a distinguished level of performance; 2. The number of students earning college credit; and 3. The number of students earning workforce certificates.

Furthermore, HB5 will establish a three category rating system which will evaluate schools on academic performance, financial performance, and community and student engagement. This will allow local communities to engage in the accountability process by requiring their districts to set goals and evaluate performance locally. School academic performance will be designated **simply A, B, C** (reflecting acceptable) or **D, F** (reflecting unacceptable), making it more transparent to parents and communities.

STATE AGRICULTURAL & RURAL LEADERS (SARL) CONFERENCE

I am honored to serve on the **International Board of Directors for Agriculture & Rural Leaders.** They recently held their **12th annual Legislative Chairs Summit.** This summit is the only meeting that provides a non-partisan educational opportunity on agriculture and rural issues for **U.S. and Canadian officials**. The meeting was very productive, I was pleased to lay out and pass two resolutions of international farm and ranch significance. One having to do with Country of Origin Labeling (COOL), and the other having to deal with the use of schedule drugs by veterinarians nationwide. These resolutions were both forwarded to both the House and Senate in Washington, D.C.

*Rep. Anderson was awarded the inaugural **Legislator Of The Year** award from the **Texas Auctioneers Association** for leading the effort to update their governing statutes. Many thanks to a fantastic, engaged, and hard-working group of folks!*

*Celebrating **"Baylor Day"** at the State Capitol February 27th with **President Ken Starr and Alice Starr**, outreach VP **Tommye Lou Davis, Karla Leeper, Gale Galloway,** and fellow legislative alumni of Baylor. **GO BEARS!***

★ ★ ★ *God Bless Texas!* ★ ★ ★

✯ DISTRICT 56

*Representative Anderson and much respected desk-mate **Representative Senfronia Thompson** work together in a bipartisan fashion to pass meaningful legislation. It's always a pleasure to work with Representative Thompson.*

*Rep. Anderson was honored to be awarded the 2013 **Elected Official of the Year** by the **Cenikor Foundation** at their annual Celebrate Recovery Community Luncheon. Cenikor Foundation is one of the oldest and most successful substance abuse treatment centers in the nation, assisting more than 1,000 people a week achieve better health and better lives. We are pleased that they offer their much needed service in the Waco area. Congratulations on the updated facility!*

ADDITIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE 83RD SESSION

TAX RELIEF

- ✯ $710 Million in franchise tax reductions for Texas businesses
- ✯ **Permanently exempt** businesses with **gross revenues** of $1 million or less from paying any state margin tax
- ✯ Provided $240 million in tax relief for research and development
- ✯ Ensured Texas's businesses are rewarded for their innovation

RETIRED TEACHERS

- ✯ Appropriated an additional $530 million to make the TRS pension fund **actuarially sound**, and an additional $80 million in funding for **TRS-Care** (the retiree health care program)
- ✯ Protects the retirement security of 1.3 million Texans, many of whom do not have Social Security
- ✯ Provided an additional **3% monthly pension increase** to those retired before 2004
- ✯ "This will ensure that we are better able to take care of those teachers who took care of our children for so many years."

SECOND AMENDMENT RIGHTS

- ✯ Gave the Attorney General the ability to stop a city or county in violation of 2nd amendment rights
- ✯ Reduced number of hours necessary to obtain or renew CHL
- ✯ Protect CHL holders from being charged for **accidental showing of firearm**
- ✯ Students and teachers can now store firearms and ammo in their cars on college campuses

✯ CRACKING DOWN ON MEDICAID FRAUD ✯

Between 2004 and 2011, the Office of Inspector General identified more than $6 billion in **fraud and waste** in Texas health and human service programs. With these epidemic levels of fraud, waste, and abuse in our Medicaid system it was essential that we put measures in place to combat these losses and allow Texas to take a more proactive approach to preventing and prosecuting Medicaid fraud. The passage of Senate Bill 8 will establish a unit at the Health and Human Services Commission to identify red flags that could indicate Medicaid fraud, and make it more difficult for fraudulent providers to take advantage of the system. There would also be enhanced policies to prevent inappropriate ambulance services, as well as establish a pilot program to study the most effective way to provide transportation to medical services for those in rural Texas. The state comptroller estimates the State will save $14.6 million over the next two years by eliminating these cases of fraud. That taxpayer money can then be put toward the purpose it was intended, to care for our most vulnerable citizens.

★ ★ ★ *God Bless Texas!* ★ ★ ★

✯ TOP LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES ✯

RESTORATION OF FUNDING FOR WACO CENTER FOR YOUTH

*Doc discusses **Waco Center for Youth** funding with interim superintendent **Dennis Edwards**, who along with now-retired superintendent **Eddie Greenfield** were key team members in responding to funding challenges brought on in the state budget writing process. We appreciate the hard work and service of both these gentlemen, as well as the dedicated staff of this vital facility. Best wishes for Mr. Greenfield in retirement!*

In August of 2012, the Department of State Health Services notified our Capitol office that, in accordance with budgeting instructions, the proposed FY 2014-15 budget for the agency reflected a zeroing out of all funding levels for the Waco Center for Youth. **Keeping this center open was my top legislative priority for the 83rd Legislature.**

This being the only residential mental health treatment facility for youth in Texas, often requiring longer residential treatment periods than any other state service provider, I initiated contact with the DSHS Commissioner, agency management, and legislative leadership over the next three months to assure that funding for the center be restored early in the budgetary process.

Once that was accomplished, in November and December of 2012, my office continued to track the progress of this measure with the House Appropriations Committee and the Department of State Health Services throughout the session to make sure there were no unforeseen changes.

I am grateful for their cooperation in restoring this program so vital to the Waco area and the many clients and patients that it serves.

✯ DANGEROUS ✯ HALLUCINOGEN BANNED

SALVIA DIVINORUM HB124

Texas has now joined 25 other states with the passage of HB 124 by Anderson, and is one more step in protecting our youngsters. With the passage of HB 124, the dangerous hallucinogen Salvia Divinorum, is now classified as a Penalty Group 3 Controlled Substance, thus making it illegal to sale, purchase, or possess. According to University of North Carolina professor Dr. Bryan Roth, who is also the director of the **Psychoactive Drug Screening Program for the National Institute of Mental Health** — it is the world's most potent naturally occurring hallucinogen. Before the passage of this legislation any person, at any age could walk into a tobacco shop and purchase this frightening drug. The readily accessibility of this dangerous hallucinogen to children and teens has made this issue one of my top priorities. In a time when it seems like new dangers parents must face lurk around every corner, we are pleased that this drug will be off the shelves and out of the hands of children, and giving parents one less thing to worry about.

*Tackling the tough questions about priorities of the 83rd Legislative Session at the **Texas Tribune "Hot Seat"** discussion with fellow legislators **Senator Brian Birdwell**, and **Representative Kyle Kacal**. This event was hosted at Baylor University.*

★ ★ ★ *God Bless Texas!* ★ ★ ★

*NASA deputy administrator Lori Garver joined us for Space Week at the Capitol, along with their commercial space flight comrades. Space flight is rocketing to the top, putting Texas as a leader in space innovation and development. This session we laid the ground work to incentivize **SpaceX** to claim Texas as their premier commercial orbital launch facility. We hope to have an answer by January 2014.*

*Doc with **Honorary Pages** for the day, **Seraphina & Vanessa Gayle.** This long-standing tradition at the Texas Capitol gives youngsters the opportunity to take a rare behind the scenes look at the way the Texas Legislature operates. I very much appreciate their assistance.*

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"Heights by great men reached and kept were not obtained by sudden flight but, while their companions slept, they were toiling upward in the night."

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

SAVE THE DATE! SALES TAX HOLIDAY AUGUST 9-11, 2013

Texas Sales Tax Holiday HAS MOVED forward a weekend to allow families more time to prepare for the upcoming school year. Take advantage of this time to do your back-to-school shopping; clothing items, regular footwear, backpacks for use by elementary and secondary school students, and most school supplies are exempt from state and local sales tax, as long as the price of the item purchased does not exceed $100.00. So mark your calendars for Friday, August 9th-11th.